

FIFTEENTH LEGISLATURE.

SKETCHES

OF

LEGISLATORS

AND

STATE OFFICERS

1876-1878.

BY JOHN CARDWELL.

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REPRESENTATIVE JOHN S. GRIFFITH is a native of Maryland, but was reared in Texas, coming to the State when he was but ten years of age. His father reached Texas a broken merchant, and he and his sons went to the plow handles for a livelihood. His book learning, in early life, was obtained at night, after the labors of the day were completed, and, finally, by a ten months' course of study at Wesleyan College, in San Augustine, Texas. He started in life penniless, but with a strong will to do ; married at twenty-two years of age, and at thirty-two had accumulated a fine fortune, nearly all of which was swept away by the issues of the war. Again he went to

work with a zeal, and has retrieved his once fallen fortunes.

Gen. Griffith won his military title in the service of the Confederate States; was a colonel under Gens. Ben. McCulloch, Van Dorn, Maury, Price, and others, all the time in active service. Before the end of the war he was promoted to the rank of brigadier-general of the second brigade of Texas State troops. He was a member of the Tenth Legislature of Texas. Since this service Gen. Griffith has repeatedly been urged to run for public position, but, preferring the pleasures of home and the enjoyment of family intercourse to office, he has often refused to allow his name to be used as a candidate. He is a gentleman of fine ability, rare common sense, strictly moral in his habits, purely patriotic, and possessed of an unusual degree of public spirit. It was the office that sought the man when he was elected to the Legislature, as the Democratic nominee of his district. He was chosen as a candidate only twenty-three days before the election, and, against a strong opposition, received a majority of 131 votes over the next candidate below him, there being nine in the field, from

among whom two were to be elected. He contended with the rival interests of those towns in Kaufman county, seeking to obtain the ascendancy over Terrell, the present county seat, and this was the cause of opposition to him.

He is a married man, is forty-seven years of age, and resides in the town of Terrell, where he conducts a mercantile interest and a real estate business. He is also largely interested in farming.